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young are comely, of a brown type, and, like the men, with highly-developed calves, the latter always being considered a beauty. The children are frequently remarkably pretty. Khasis carry very heavy burdens, it being the custom for the males of the country to carry a maund, or 82 lbs. weight, or even more commonly, on his back, the load being fixed by means of a cane band which is worn across the forehead; women carry almost as heavy loads as the men. The coolies, both male and female, commonly do the journey between Cherrapunji and Shillong, or between Shillong and Jowai, in one day, carrying the heavy loads above mentioned. Each of the above journeys is some thirty miles. They carry their great loads of rice and salt from Therria to Cherrapunji, an ascent of about 4,000 feet in some three to four miles, in the day. The Khasis are probably the best porters in the north of India, and have frequently been requisitioned for transport purposes on military expeditions.

The people are cheerful in disposition, and are light-hearted by nature, and, unlike the plains people, seem to thoroughly appreciate a joke. It is pleasant to hear on the road down to Therriaghat from Cherrapunji, in the early morning the whole hillside resounding with the scraps of song and peals of laughter of the coolies, as they run nimbly down the short cuts on their way to market. The women are specially cheerful, and pass the time of day and handy jokes with passers-by with quite an absence of reserve. The Khasis are certainly more industrious than the Assamese, are generally good-tempered, but are occasionally prone to sudden outbursts of anger, accompanied by violence. They are fond of music, and rapidly learn the hymn tunes which are taught them by the Welsh missionaries. Khasis are devoted to their offspring, and the women make excellent nurses for European children, frequently becoming much attached to their little charges. The people, like the Japanese, are fond of nature. A Khasi loves a day out in the woods, where he thoroughly enjoys himself. If he does not go out shooting or fishing, he is content to sit still and contemplate nature. He has a separate name for each of the commoner birds and flowers. He also has names for many butterflies and moths. These are traits which are not found usually in the people of India.

headquarters of the Administration. The manufacture of country spirit gives employment to a considerable number of persons, most of whom are females. At a recent census of the country stills in the district, undertaken by the district officials, the number of stills has been found to be 1,500. There must be at least one person employed at each still, so that the number of distillers is probably not less than 2,000, possibly more. The spirit is distilled both for home consumption and for purposes of sale, in some villages almost entirely for sale. In the Jaintia Hills stock-breeding and dealing in cattle provides occupation for 1,200 people, according to the last census. The cattle are reared in the Jaintia Hills and are driven down to the plains when they reach the age of maturity, where they find a ready market amongst the Sylhetis. Cattle are also driven into Shillong for sale from the Jaintia Hills. Another place for rearing cattle is the Siemship of Nongkhlaw, where there is good pasturage in the neighbourhood of Mairang. These cattle are either sold in Shillong or find their way to the Kamrup district by the old Nongkhlaw road. Cattle-breeding is an industry which is capable of expansion in these hills. There are a few carpenters to be found in Shillong and its neighbourhood. The Khasis are said by Col. Waddell to be unacquainted with the art of weaving; but the fact that a considerable weaving industry exists amongst the Khyrwang villages of the Syntengs, and at Myaw and Sohlings, has been overlooked by him. The Khyrwangs weave a special pattern of cotton and silk cloth, striped red and white. In Myaw and Sohlings similar cloths are woven, also the sleeveless coat. In former days this industry is said to have been considerable, but it has been displaced to a large extent of late years by Manchester piece goods. The number of weavers returned at the last census in the district was 533. The Khasis and Mikirs of the low country, or Bhois as they are called, weave cotton cloths which they dye with the leaves of a plant called u soh. This is perhaps the wild indigo, or rem, of the Shan settlers in the Assam Valley. The weavers are almost always females. An important means of subsistence is road and building work; a considerable number of Khasis, both male and female, are employed under Government, practically throughout the year, in

1:Gordon E-4, 9 (no date) 1907 AR? Khasi AR?

or official quarters of the State's Doctor. Another part of each is furnished by the people of the State.

The houses of the well-to-do Khasis of the present day in Mawkhar and Cherrapunji are built after the modern style with iron roofs, chimneys, glass windows and doors. In Jowai the well-to-do traders have excellent houses of the European pattern, which are as comfortable as many of the European subordinates' quarters in Shillong. Some up-to-date families in Shillong and at Cherra allow themselves muslin curtains and European furniture.

The houses of the Four Wars are peculiar. The roof, which is thatched with the leaves of a palm called a *tpeviar*, is long-backed and the eaves come down almost to the ground. There are three rooms in the War as in the Khasi house, although called by different names in the War dialect. The hearth is in the centre room. The houses are built flush with the ground and are made of bamboos. In the War villages of Nongpi and Umsiah there are small houses erected in the compounds of the ordinary dwelling-houses called *ing kmai* (spirit house). In these houses offerings to the spirits of departed family ancestors are placed at intervals, this practice being very similar to the more ancient form of Shintoism. In some War villages there are also separate bachelors' quarters. This custom is in accordance with that of the Naga tribes. There is no such custom amongst the Khasi Uplanders. The War houses are similar to those of the Four Wars, except that a portion of the house is generally built on a platform, the main house resting on the hill-side and the portion on the platform projecting therefrom, the object being to obtain more space, the area for houses in the village sites being often limited owing to the steepness of the hill-sides.

The Bhoi and Lyngam houses are practically similar, and may be described together. They are generally built on fairly high platforms of bamboo, are frequently 20 to 40 ft. in length, and are divided into various compartments in order to suit the needs of the family. The hearth, which is of earth, is in the centre room. There is a platform at the back of the Lyngam house, and in front of the Bhoi house, used for drying paddy, spreading chillies, &c., and for sitting on when the day's

1:Gordon E-6, 9 (no date) 1987 ABT Khasi ABT

like a pendulum. An explanation of this method of divination will be found in the paragraph dealing with divination.

There is also a pair of spectacles used by the old and spectacles for breaking up betel-nut. In the houses of the well-to-do is to be seen the ordinary bottle-bottle of India. Outside the houses of cultivators are wooden troughs hollowed out of the trunks of trees, which are used either as drinking troughs for cattle or for feeding pigs. A special set of utensils is used for manufacturing liquor. The fishing and War articles of furniture and utensils are the same as those of the Khasis, with different names, a remark which applies also to those of the Bhois and Lyngams. Both the latter, however, use leaves as plates, the Bhoi using the wild plantain and the Lyngam a large leaf called *ka ïe maweng*. The leaves are thrown away after eating, fresh leaves being gathered for each meal. The Lyngams use a quilt (*ka ngilaw*) made out of the bark of a tree of the same name as a bed covering. This tree is perhaps the same as the Garo *simpok*. In the Bhoi and Lyngam houses the swinging shelf for keeping firewood is not to be seen, nor in the latter to be found amongst the sub-montane Bodo tribes in Assam.

MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.

The Khasis have not many musical instruments, and those that they possess, with one or two exceptions, are of very much the same description as those of the Assamese. There are several kinds of drums, viz. *ka nídsi*, which is a large kettle-drum made of wood having the head covered with deer-skin; *ka kaing*, which is a cylindrically-shaped drum rather smaller than the Assamese *dhol* (*ka kaing kyrthei* takes its name from the fact that this drum is beaten when women, *kyrthei*, dance); *ka padiah*, a small drum with a handle made of wood; *kotam*, a small circular drum. Khasi drums are nearly always made of wood, not of metal, like the drums to be seen in the monasteries of Upper Assam, or of earthenware, as in Lower Assam.

Ka duitara is a guitar with **two** silk strings, which is

the streams. Khasis, except the Wars and the people of Shella, unlike the Assamese and Bengalis, do not fish with nets, nor do they use the bamboo-work device known by the Assamese as *palo* (পলো) and *jak* (জাক). The method of fish-poisoning of the Khasis is the same as that described by Soppitt in his account of the tribes inhabiting North Cachar. The following is a description of how Khasis poison fish in the western portion of the district; it may be taken as a sample of the whole. A large quantity of the bark of the tree *lo sopsin* and the creeper *u khariew* is first brought to the river-side to a place on the stream a little above the pool which it is proposed to poison, where it is thoroughly beaten with sticks till the juice exudes and flows into the water, the juice being of a milky white colour. In a few minutes the fish begin to rise and splash about, and, becoming stupefied, allow themselves to be caught in the shallows. If the beating of the bark has been well carried out, many of the fish soon die and allow a time float on the surface of the water. A large number of Khasis stand on the banks armed with bamboo scoops shaped like small landing nets, to catch the fish, and fish traps (*ki khoreh*) *Anamese khoh* (ঢোকা) are laid between the stones in the rapids to secure any fish that may escape the fishing party. Another fish poison is the leaves of *soh lew*, the juice of which is beaten out in the same manner as described above.

Soppitt says, certain fish do not appear to be susceptible to the poison, and not nearly the destruction takes place that is popularly supposed. The mahseer and the carp family generally do not suffer much, whereas, on the other hand, the river shark, the *bagh mas* of the Bengalis, is killed in large numbers. It is impossible, however, in the opinion of the writer, that the mahseer fry, which abound in these hill rivers in the spring and early summer months, can escape being destroyed in great numbers when the streams are frequently poisoned. In the neighbourhood of lime quarries and other large works where dynamite is used for blasting, this explosive is sometimes employed for killing fish. The practice, however, has been strictly prohibited, and there have been some cases in which the offenders have been punished in the courts. Fish-poisoning is bad enough, but dynamiting is still worse, as with an effective

I:Cen-Ens E-4, 9 (no date) 1901 AR? Khasi AR?

COTTON CLOTHS.

In the Jaintia Hills at Myrao cotton is spun into thread, and weaving is carried on there, but on a limited scale. The Myrao people weave the small strips of cloth worn by the men to serve the purpose of the *kaumeem kenjai* or Hindi *langoti*. In Nobinga the people import cotton thread from Myrao and weave the (*ingki*) or sleeveless coat, peculiar to the district; these coats are dyed red and blue. The dark blue or black dye is obtained from the leaf of a plant called *u nghe*, which Mr. Ellis has identified as *strobilanthes kunthiana*, which grows in the gardens round the homesteads. The leaves are dried, then reduced to powder, mixed with hot water, and the skeins of thread are steeped in the liquid. The colour is permanent. The red dye is obtained from the mixture of the dye bark of two shrubs, *ka lapyndong* (*myrsine semiserrata*, Roxb.) and *ka lasong* (*morinda tinctoria*, Roxb.), the latter being the same as the *kaumeem* (*oldenlandia umbellata*). The bark is dried, then pounded, and the two sorts are mixed together and made into a paste with hot water. The skeins are steeped in this mixture for twenty-four hours, then taken out and divided, and again steeped for another twenty-four hours. The Lalungs and Khois and Lyngams all weave cotton cloths, which are generally dyed blue, sometimes striped blue and red. The Wars weave cotton cloths which are dyed red and yellow, the cloths being woven in checks. Mr. Darrah remarks that the cotton grown in the Jaintia Hills is said to be the best cotton produced in the province. Its thread can be more closely woven than that of other kinds. This statement, however, is not borne out by Mr. Allen writing in 1858, who says that the cotton is of inferior quality, the staple being short and woolly. The cotton cloths woven by the Khois are called *ryan*.

POTTERY.

The Census Report of 1901 gave the number of persons who are supported by the manufacture of pottery at 54 only. Pottery is manufactured at one place only in the Jaintia Hills,

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and offered to help them with their cultivation. The Khasis also refused her, saying they were capable of managing their own cultivation, and at the same time told her to go to the country of the Bhoie and Syntengs, i.e. the Jaintia Hills. Acting on this advice, she went to the village of Nongkyllod in the Jaintia Hills, where the people again turned a deaf ear to her. She proceeded to Mulngein village in Jaintia, at the foot of the Jaintia Hills, and ascended from thence to Kyrshai, where she met a man who conducted her to the house of the Siem, who consented that she and her children should live with him. Ka Tolem then apportioned to her children various duties in the house of the Siem as follows:—Ka Basneng was to look after the young unmarried folk, and was to supervise their daily labour and to prosper their trading operations at the markets. Next Ka Basneng was given a place at the foot of the king post, *tnai sinkat*, and her duty was to befriend young men in battle. Then came *Ka Longkhaiswaid*, alias *ka Thah-balieng*, who said, "There are no more rooms in the house for my occupation, so I will go and live in the forest, and him who turns not his coat when I meet him I will make mad." Finally came *U Lamuyngkod*, who elected to live with his youngest sister inside the house.

There are special sacrifices offered to these household deities. The leaves of the *sning*, or Khasi oak, are wrapped round the post of the house, and a fowl is sacrificed and other formalities are observed which it would be tedious to describe in detail. The legend of the arrival of Ka Tolem with her children in the Synteng country from a distant clime is interesting in that it perhaps indicates the possibility of the migration of these people, i.e. the Syntengs, in ancient times from some distant place to their present abode.

ANCESTOR-WORSHIP.

The Khasis not only revere the memories of deceased ancestors, but they adore them by means of offerings, which are sometimes periodical, and sometimes made when thought neces-

[illegible] Section-I [illegible] [illegible]

[illegible] kept by the S'lem *dii*. Everything that comes in, such as taxes, [illegible] fines, or that which comes in through the administration of justice must be given to her. She may dispose of it as she will here, while the S'lem receives from her the money necessary for paying the costs of the government.

The S'lem *dii* is the sole authority in matters of religion. She must watch over the religious sacrifices and determine the time and place for them. /Seeing p. 687 fig. 1.2/ The sacrifice (Nongkrem Puja) among the Khasi/ /Jaintia/ do sacrificers are held in her house or in front of her house, and they must be performed in her presence. The actual S'lem is however an employee of every clan-[illegible] sister relative, who is chosen by the "clan council," the laitmaris.

After the death of the S'lem *dii*, this office passes to her eldest living daughter, and lacking such to the eldest daughter of her eldest daughter, and lacking such granddaughters to the eldest daughter, and so forth. In case there are no daughters or granddaughters, the eldest living sister takes the office; if there are no sisters, then the eldest daughter of the eldest sister of the mother of the deceased S'lem *dii* is the successor, and so it goes further. In this way the office always remains within the royal lineage.

In the house of the S'lem *dii* (called ka-ing *dii*), which is [illegible] one of the largest and most attractive in the Khasi Hills, there is a [illegible] post in the middle which reaches from the floor to the ridge of the [illegible] roof. It is called a rishot Basi (*pasi, pillar of god*) and serves at the same time as the altar before which many sacrifices are performed. The pillar is nothing other than the trunk of the Khasi sob (*ka dieng-sang*, botanical name: *castanopsis sp.*), which is holy to the Khasi. If the house of the S'lem *dii* burns down, or if it is built up anew, a new pillar must be brought. Only certain families (*jaid*) have the privilege of cutting down the trees for this purpose. As soon as it is cut down, dancing and music begin, the trunk is covered with a cloth and carried away on a carrying frame. Hundreds of persons participate in this. As long as the pillar is not set up, it is guarded night and day. A person or an animal might jump over it and that would be *seng* (= taboo); the trunk would be defiled and another tree would have to be cut down. If something dreadful happens in the kingdom, or if a danger threatens, the S lem *dii* goes with six official sacrificial priests of the kingdom Nongkrem below the post and offers sacrifice there in order to avert the evil.

The foregoing has to be mentioned in order to give a better understanding of the following.

The Nongkrem Puja usually takes place in the month of May.

+[See category 116, p.14 --- Analyst]

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(2) T'mof nin, —or departed maternal great-uncle.
(1) T'shan long, —or departed great-grandfather.

A very striking feature of the Ekoi religion is the use of the leaves of the *Akporing* (*Q. tessmannii*) or Ekoi oak tree. The leaves of this tree are used to cover the sacrificial beds, a sprig of the oak is implanted in the ground before the sacrifices of fowls or goats take place, an oak bough is hung up inside the house along with the jaw-bones and horns of sacrificial animals and the feathers of fowls. A great part of oak is to be found within the avenue of the sacred residence of the Nsan priestess of Ekpon, the custodian of the religion of the Ekoi of that name. Another feature is the use of slabs of stone on certain ceremonial occasions, and no Ekoi religious ceremony takes place without the use of a small gourd a thing from which libation are poured out to the gods. Bearing always conspicuous reference of any importance, e.g., funeral ceremonies, the erection of memorial stones, and the great pujo of the Ekoi of Nsofang.

13. *Memorial stones.*—These are without doubt the most prominent features connected with these people. The first thing that strikes any visitor to the Ekoi and Juistic Hills is the immense number of these stones. The latter are placed in a line, a higher one in the centre, and lower ones on each side. The centre monolith is ceremonially covered with a round flat stone. The upright stones are always in uneven numbers, being in sets of three, five, seven, or even nine stones. In front of each set of three stones is placed one horizontal stone, or monolith which rests on three or four small upright stones, the horizontal stone being raised to about one foot from the ground. If five upright stones are erected, two horizontal stones are placed in front of them, and if seven are erected three, and so on. There can be no doubt that these stones possess considerable significance, but what exactly that significance is I am at present engaged in investigating. As far as my information extends at present, I give the following explanation.

Memorial stones may be divided for the present into two classes—

(a) Stones erected by the family, or kin, in accordance with the Ekoi custom of ancestor worship.

(b) Stones which are erected by children in honour of a deceased parent.

It should be remarked that both classes of stones are merely cenotaphs, the mausoleums of the ancestors or the parents often being nowhere near the places where the memorial stones are erected. Taking class (a) first: Supposing that five upright stones are erected and two horizontal stones as depicted in plate III.[2/9]

[2/9 [see end plate 1 - - - - Analyst]

16:Roy 1-5 (no date) 1938 AS? Khasi AS?

592 The Khasi knows the 'hyniah'. The word *hyr* means 'to appear', and, *niah* means foul, thus *hyniah* means to defile or corrupt; and 'tap' means cover, *hyrtap* means to cover, to spread over. Hence *ka hyniah ka hyrtap* means something which spreads over and makes everything foul, defiled and corrupt. Khasis regard marriage even in the case of cousins as not the right thing (lit., not good), the *khun kha* (son of the son) that is the 5 son and his sister to give the seed to the house of his *kmie kha* (mother of the son, i.e. father's mother), that is, the house of the a group. Thus [593] no seed, e.g., seed of trees, rice, cucumber, pumkins, *shrie* or Job's tears, or millet, are taken from the children of the son by the family of the mother of that son, that is, no seed is taken from the children (*ki khun kha*) born of the son by his mother and sisters. Any seed given by these grand-children born of the brothers must be paid for if taken by his mother and sisters.

Thus Khasis do not consider that it is good for children of the brothers to marry the children of the sisters, though they are cousins, i.e. for III (a) to marry II(a). They believe that there will be misfortune and that they will not thrive. They consider it is better that the brother of II(a) marries the sister of III(a). In the case of these nearest cousins, however, they avoid such marriages so long as I (b), the father who is the uncle of II(a) is alive. [Table (3)]

Khasis do not consider it the right thing (regard it as 'bad') for the elder or younger brother of the wife to marry the elder or younger sister of

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household deities, and nameless and unaffixed deities. Deities of the first two categories are simply aspects of the high God or Goddess. • The earth is peopled with two great orders of land demons and water demons who cause all undesirable, unnatural, and otherwise inexplicable events, acting either on their own or as instruments in the hands of sorcerers. Apart from omens, both in nature and in dreams, Khasis attach supernatural significance also to mystic numbers, and to the colors white, black, and red. They hold especially important folk beliefs regarding betel nut, paddy rice, gold and silver, and clothing. **Practitioners.** The two classes of religious practitioners are the village or state priests and the sacrificers. Both are male. They use the same divinatory tools—pieces of cracked broken eggshells and the entrails of cocks, and they both sacrifice cocks, hens, goats, pigs, and cattle. These skills are not taught to them so much as picked up by observation and confirmed by demonstrations of efficacy. A priest is elected from among the men of his sib to direct his skills to the public good until he dies, and his rewards are institutionalized and come from the village or the state. A sacrificer acts for private persons or his groups, as call, and is rewarded by them personally with gifts in cash or in kind. The sacrificer is called upon to explain and then to ritually remedy every variety of misfortune, especially illness, though his powers are nowadays regarded with ambivalence, and he is widely suspected to become a sorcerer sooner or later. • There are two major types of sorcerer. One is the ritual specialist or sacrificer who secretly turns his skills from good to evil, manipulating demons to injure a person or his group, and acting always for himself alone out of considerations of jealousy or revenge. The other is normally a leading citizen, a woman who is so wealthy and successful that it is believed that she must keep a *thlen*, i.e. a creature which will bring her prosperity as long as she feeds it periodically with human blood. To provide this blood, the men of her household, or other males whom she bewitches with a special whisky, will indiscriminately murder anyone except a member of her matrilineage. The Jaintias have an analogue to the *thlen* in their *tuvo*, except that the ultimate result is death from illness rather than murder. Minor witchcraft can be perpetrated by poison keepers or persons with an evil eye, who are often women. **Ceremonies.** The important traditional ceremonies were the life-crisis rituals relating to pregnancy and childbirth, the naming of a child, and death. Lesser ceremonies related to marriage and divorce, and to housebuilding. All these rituals were addressed primarily to the ancestors, and they are still performed in modified form by many Khasis. Other rituals, which were performed by groups such as villages, sibs, local descent groups, or households, were addressed to the unnamed aspects of the high